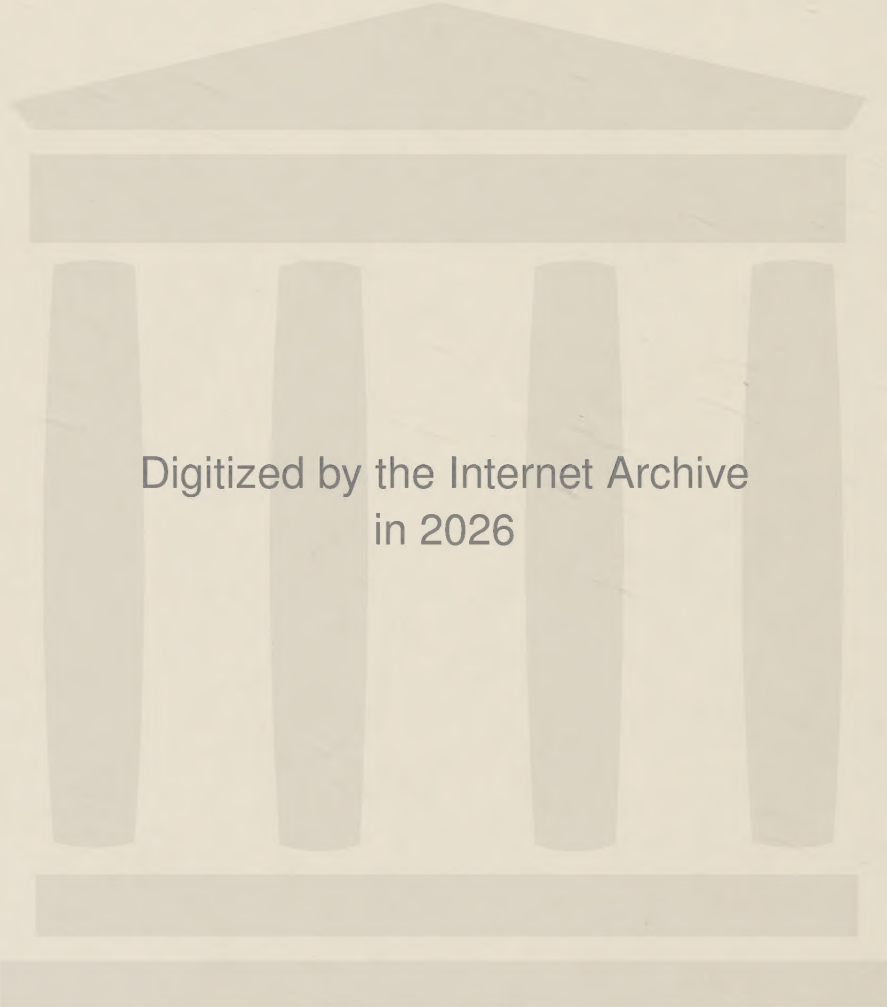
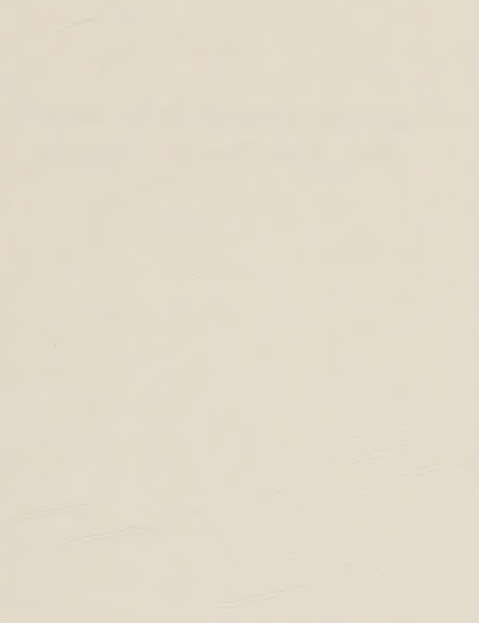




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• APINESS •

*Report of a Regional Meeting
Bangkok, 12 - 16 May 1986*



UNESCO REGIONAL OFFICE
Bangkok, 1986

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Programme and Budget approved by the General Conference at its twenty-third session (Document 23 C/5, approved para 06416), UNESCO Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific (RUSHSAP) organized, in collaboration with the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils (AASSREC), a Regional Expert Meeting to develop programme and activities for the proposed Network of Social Science Documentation and Information Centres, tentatively called APINESS.

The Meeting was held at the UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, from 12 through 16 May 1986.

Participants attending the meeting were representatives of the Social Science Research Councils of the region -- mainly their information and documentation centres, or the national libraries and other national organizations designated by the National Commissions of their respective member states to act as national contact points for the newly launched network. As many as 16 countries were represented, namely Australia, Bangladesh, People's Republic of China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Turkey. At the regional level, organizations and already existing networks such as ASTINFO, AMIC and SEDNAP also participated in the meeting. AASSREC was represented by its Secretary-General. In addition, there were observers from the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Bangkok; the Institute of Developing Economies (IDE), Tokyo; the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) -- which sent officers belonging to its Social Development Division, Library and Documentation Unit, and the ESCAP-UNCHS Joint Unit on Human Settlements.

In all, 38 persons (including UNESCO staff) attended the meeting. The list of participants and observers is given in Appendix IV.

II. RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

Recognizing the need felt by the Asian social science community to strengthen infra-structures related to social science documentation and information, UNESCO organized in 1983 a first Workshop on Information Sources, Systems and Services in the field of Social Sciences. Several of the recommendations made at the meeting requested UNESCO to develop a comprehensive approach eventually leading to the establishment and promotion of a regional mechanism for the exchange of information. As a follow-up, UNESCO commissioned a feasibility study for the setting up of a regional network. This was discussed at the 6th General Conference of AASSREC, held in 1985 in Bali, Indonesia, and again at the Executive Council Meeting of AASSREC in February 1986 at which AASSREC decided to collaborate with UNESCO in establishing the network and organizing the present meeting.

UNESCO approached the National Commissions as well as the national Social Science research councils or academies to examine the feasibility study and to indicate, in principle, their willingness to join the proposed network. The countries which showed interest in participating in this network were invited to designate the national contact point and send a representative from that institution to the meeting.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- (i) to launch the new network tentatively named Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences (APINESS);
- (ii) to develop details of networking arrangements at the national and regional level;
- (iii) to identify priority activities (training, exchange visits, exchange of information, infra-structural reinforcement, servicing of the network etc.); and
- (iv) to elaborate a work-plan for the network activities for the period 1986-1989.

In preparation of the meeting the participants were requested to bring with them brief country statements on documentation and information services focussing on the following topics:

- (i) social science documentation and information services in the country;
- (ii) existing forms, if any, of networking structure in the country;
- (iii) status of documentation/information manpower development;
- (iv) areas that need priority attention in information, documentation, and data banking.

III. THE OPENING SESSION

The meeting began in the morning of May 12, 1986 at the Conference Room of UNESCO Regional Office, Bangkok.

Mrs Savitri Suwansathit, Deputy Secretary-General of Thailand National Commission for UNESCO welcomed the participants on behalf of the National Commission, expressed her wishes for the success of the meeting and hoped that the meeting will come out with suitable and concrete proposals. The idea of having some kind of regional mechanism for the exchange of information in social sciences, she said, was first proposed at the 6th Regional Conference of National Commissions for UNESCO in Asia and the Pacific, held in India in 1975. Since then, she added, Thailand has always expressed her full support and encouragement for the development of this project.

Dr Choompol Swasdiyakorn, Secretary-General of the National Research Council of Thailand, thanked UNESCO and AASSREC for launching such a timely undertaking. The National Research Council of Thailand, which serves as the national focal point for the UNESCO sponsored regional network in the field of science and technology (ASTINFO), is, he said, most appreciative to have a parallel arrangement extended to the area of social science information and documentation.

In his welcome remarks, Professor Iqbal Narain, Secretary-General of AASSREC, expressed pride in the launching of the network, in the working of which AASSREC will continue to cooperate. He emphasized the role assumed by AASSREC in facilitating intellectual cooperation among social scientists of the region. However, he said, the national infra-structures handling documentation and information processing are still weak and several information gaps exist among the Asian and Pacific social scientists. The proposed network will open up new vistas of academic collaborative research and co-operation in the region.

Asia-Pacific information network in social sciences

The meeting was then inaugurated by Dr M. Makagiansar, Assistant Director-General for Co-ordination of UNESCO Activities in Asia and the Pacific. In his speech, he mentioned about the exponential growth of scientific research in the world and regretted the lack of infra-structures in the Asia-Pacific countries to collect, preserve, and disseminate this knowledge. He pointed out that nowadays about 27,000 scientific and technical documents are published daily making a yearly total of 8-10 million. Between 1965 and 1974, about 571,000 books were published, doubling the previous decade's total of 269,000. It has been estimated that 5,000 primary journals and 100,000 monographs are published annually in the field of social science.

All this material, the UNESCO Assistant Director-General said, needs to be collected, preserved and made available to serve the needs of scholars, institutions and nations. The social science network will fill a fundamental void and provide social scientists of the region greater access to their colleagues' work.

Thanking Dr Makagiansar for his inaugural address, the Regional Adviser for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, Dr Yogesh Atal, reemphasized the close cooperation achieved between UNESCO and AASSREC in developing and shaping the idea of setting up this regional mechanism. He also expressed his gratitude to Dr Choompol Swasdiyakorn and Mrs Savitri Suwansathit for their warm support and enthusiasm given to this project.

Referring to the network project, Dr Atal said that this "is to be seen as a mechanism for breaking information-isolation, and for helping develop adequate infra-structures at the national level. The concept of network is proposed to be defined, in this context, as an *inter-institutional* arrangement, rather than creation of a supra-national centre. Each member of the network is to be conceived as a centre with its own circle of interactions guided by the commonality of interests and pattern of priorities. We do not envisage a centre-of-centres at the regional level. The guiding philosophy for this network would be *decentralization*. It will promote a system of linkages nationally, regionally, and even internationally. It will try to identify existing national centres that can add to them regional dimension for certain specialized activities, and also involve sub-regional and regional centres which may enlarge their clientele. The interactions in the framework of this mechanism will be mutually supportive".

IV. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

After a tea break, the participants were called to elect the office bearers. The following were nominated:

Chairman	:	Mr Rahim Zain (Malaysia)
Vice Chairmen	:	1. Mr S.P. Agrawal (India)
		2. Dr Muhammad Aslam Khan (Pakistan)
Rapporteur-General	:	Mr John Gallacher (New Zealand)

The following agenda, proposed by the UNESCO secretariat, was approved :

- (i) Opening of the Meeting
- (ii) Election of Office Bearers and Adoption of Agenda
- (iii) Briefing on the proposed network and presentation of background documents
- (iv) Country situation on social science documentation and information centres
- (v) Institutional framework and governing structure of APINESS
- (vi) Programme of activities and proposals for 1986-1989
 - (a) Data Banks and Archives
 - (b) Documentation and Information
- (vii) Conclusions and Recommendations
- (viii) Adoption of the Report
- (ix) Closing of the Meeting.

The suggested time table was also approved by the Group. This is given in Appendix III.

Following the adoption of the Agenda, the Chairman invited Professor Ursula G. Picache, Resource Person, to briefly summarize the major findings of the feasibility study carried out by her for the setting up of APINESS.

Responding to the request, Professor Picache described the main characteristics of the social science information facilities in the region. In each of the countries under study, she remarked, there do exist infra-structures for documentation and information but their level of development widely differs. A status of asymmetrical development affects the range of services and information capacities of libraries and documentation centres. Sharing of information and sources among these institutions could be achieved if their often not coordinated efforts are channelized into a cooperative framework. After illustrating the kind of priority activities to be undertaken and suggesting a strategy for implementation of the network, she pointed out that existing networking arrangements may serve as models for the development of APINESS. She suggested that it might be useful to follow the network model set up by UNESCO in the field of science and technology (ASTINFO).

Mrs Susanne Ornager, UNESCO Associate Expert in Communication and Information Services and Systems made a statement describing functions and activities performed by ASTINFO. The Network, she said, consisting of National Coordinating Units, Associate Centres and Associate Networks is building on infra-structures in the participating countries. Within the Network, the strengthening of the national infra-structures is emphasized to enable the participating institutions to share information or other resources within, and between, countries. The ASTINFO objectives are determined by the countries themselves while the total programme is based on common needs and interests. Examples of project activities are the training of information specialists and users in different fields, and provision of micro-computers in order to develop data bases in specific subject areas. Nineteen countries are participating in the ASTINFO Network and more are supposed to join soon.

The subject was further expanded by Dr A. Neelameghan of the UNESCO General Information Programme Division. He remarked that the area of action of ASTINFO goes beyond the pure field of science and technology. In many respects, he said, the ASTINFO project involves institutions operating in the field of social sciences. In this regard, it would be advisable, and feasible, to think of possible ways of cooperation between the two networks. Examples of such joint areas of action could be in the preparation of common manuals and standard tools for information exchange, and in the organization of training programmes for information personnel.

As for the most suitable structure to be chosen for the proposed APINESS Network, Dr Neelameghan pointed out that UNESCO does not intend to impose a particular model. He provided examples of different arrangements, other than ASTINFO, operating in other regions of the world.

Concluding the morning session, Dr Atal briefly reviewed the main points that emerged during the discussion. He stressed the importance of making full use of the experience made in developing ASTINFO. The possibility of linking somehow the two networks, he added, is most welcome and it could be facilitated by having, wherever possible, common national focal points.

Chapter Two

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Development of social sciences in the region of Asia and the Pacific is characterized by some special features. Their relatively short history as academic disciplines is one, and their uneven or asymmetric development is another, and these two are intricately intertwined and are deeply rooted in the very nature of "exogeneity" of these disciplines. Added to this is the use of national languages in the conduct of teaching and research which makes communications across the countries somewhat problematic.

The different stages of growth of the various social science disciplines in different countries of the region also accounts for the asymmetry that exists in regard to the organization of social science documentation and information. Such an asymmetry can be viewed as a major obstacle to a programme of regional co-operation; but it can also be a strong argument for promoting such co-operation in order to ameliorate the situation : those who are advanced can help those who have lagged behind. The recent advances in the techniques of information handling, which were made possible by the electronic revolution, are now there to help in this task. Depending upon the level of current infra-structural development, national strategies will have to be devised; in this effort sharing of experience is a *sine qua non*.

This chapter provides an overview of the present situation in the area of social science documentation/information in the Asian and Pacific countries. It is based on the presentation of the country statements, supplemented by the two reports* namely, the final report of Asian Regional Seminar on *Information sources, systems and services in the social sciences* (1983, Manila) and *Organization of Social Science Information and Documentation*. The overview covers the following topics:

- 1) Social science documentation and information infrastructure
- 2) Information and documentation services

* Both reports were produced in conjunction with a Regional Seminar on Information Sources, Systems, and Services in Social Sciences organized by UNESCO in collaboration with the Institute of Library Science, University of the Philippines.

- 3) Training of Information Specialists
- 4) Data Bases in Social Sciences
- 5) Network.

1. SOCIAL SCIENCE DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION INFRA-STRUCTURE

Social Science documentation and information infra-structures in various countries differ in regard to organizational pattern and location, mandate, coverage, facilities, and the period of their existence.

While some countries have established documentation and information centres in their respective national social science councils and, thus, are mandated to co-ordinate collection and flow of information in social sciences in the country, in others the task of documentation and information services is handled by different institutions such as libraries in the universities, the National Library, and the research units within government departments. More often than not, social science collection and information services form only a part of a broader collection of materials dealing with other disciplines. In a number of cases, what exists is a more systematically organized documentation and information services in specific social science disciplines or topics such as economics, business administration, population, mass communication, development. A majority of these libraries and documentation centres still continue to provide traditional documentation services. However, some of them also provide other information services such as editorial services, publishing, and systematic dissemination of publications, and training in informatics.

2. DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION SERVICES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

Bibliographic control of the social science literature is rather uneven. While in some countries, extensive coverage of both retrospective and current materials is undertaken, in several others, this is not so. In many of the countries documentation and information services in the social sciences are not centrally co-ordinated. Various institutions participate in the different bibliographic activities especially in those countries where the National Library has not been able to carry out the task on its own. Specialized subject bibliographies are compiled for a number of social science disciplines, notably economics and statistics.

Indexing and abstracting services for the current periodical literature are likewise at different stages of development. Whereas in some countries the coverage of the social science disciplines is extensive, in others there is a noticeable lack of such tools for making materials more readily accessible.

Some of the countries in the region have published comprehensive directories and inventories of manpower, institutions, periodicals, and of completed or ongoing research projects in the social sciences. But these are sadly lacking in several other countries. Similarly, in many countries, the directories and inventories are not periodically updated.

Reference and referral services are undertaken in many libraries and information centres in the various countries. However, in most instances, interlibrary loan service is restricted and informal in nature. Except in countries where consortia and network arrangements exist, reciprocal borrowing privileges are limited.

Current awareness services are provided in many instances but most of the time they take the form of acquisitions lists or lists of new acquisitions/arrivals only. SDI (Selective Dissemination of Information) service is very limited.

Almost all of the countries undertake the more traditional library and documentation services such as provision of bibliographies, indexes, current awareness, and SDI. In addition to information about information, it appears that very few countries transform and repackage information into other forms such as state-of-the-art, case studies, monographs, newsletters, and policy-oriented documents. Research and evaluation surveys of producers and users of information, of the usefulness of library and information services, or of information flow have hardly been undertaken.

Computerized storage and retrieval of information in the social sciences is still in its infancy.

3. TRAINING OF INFORMATION SPECIALISTS

There is a proliferation of training of information specialists and librarians in the university or pre-service level towards the attainment of bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees in library and information science. However, the contents of these courses usually cover a wide gamut of subject areas in library and information science to develop general knowledge and skills in the field. Very rarely are they exclusively about social sciences and for social science information specialists.

A need is thus felt, for more short-term, on-the-job, or in-service type of training to develop further specialized skills of librarians, documentalists and information specialists in the fields of computer application especially in the storage and retrieval of social science information, development of data base and in the transformation and repackaging of information into forms that can be readily used by policy-makers, practitioners and researchers in addition to the more traditional forms such as bibliographies and indexes.

4. DATA BASES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

Some of the countries in the region have computerized data banks. Except for a few countries which deal with specialized social science data base, data bases of the holdings of libraries in the countries of the region form only a part of wider and general data bases.

For example, in Australia, the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN) has established the National Bibliographic Data Base (NBD) which contains more than four million locations for materials held in Australian libraries. It provides automated national bibliographic and information service based on a co-operative on-line shared cataloguing facilities. In New Zealand, the New Zealand Bibliographic Network (NZBN) also consists of the holding of libraries and provides on-line computer retrieval.

In Malaysia, there are two computerized data bases within the framework of Malaysia Research Library Network (MARLIN) being maintained at the Computer Centre of the Science University in Penang. These include the MALMARC and PERPUNET. Its major outputs of the holdings and locations are undertaken on a co-operative basis.

In the Republic of Korea, it is reported that many data bases exist and are part of various computer networks -- both private and government. However, most of them focus on natural sciences. Those which had been identified as dealing with social sciences are the data base in the Korean Development Institute (KDI) which link ministries and research centres concerned with economic policy-making. The Korea Social Science Research Library provides Dialog Information Retrieval Service with 200 data bases through Lockheed's Dialog Information Retrieval Service.

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Two countries whose data bases focus on social sciences are India and Japan. The Indian Council of Social Science Research has set up a Data Archives Division where survey data of research projects are being deposited in machine-readable form and made available to social scientists for further analysis. More specialized data bases are found in Japan. These include the MUSE (Multi-use Socio-Economic data banks project) which is an inter-university consortium for the exchange of socio-economic data files, and the BASS (Bibliographic Archives for Social Science data base) project which aims to construct a bibliographic data base for retrospective search.

These existing data bases have generated national bibliographies and national union catalogues. However, most of these contain periodicals and journals although social science research heavily depends on monograph type of publications. It has been found that compiling a union catalogue of periodicals is relatively easier than a catalogue of monographs.

With regard to data banking of social science statistics, only two countries have been reported as having created data files of government statistics and field survey data arising from research projects.

One of the main problems in computerization is the use of the national languages and national script. Computer specialists are engaged in finding a solution to this problem. There is also a trend to under-estimate the software, indexing and service costs. Some co-ordination problems exist between compatibility of different applications. Newly established software and information processing bodies may bridge this gap bringing de facto national standards and assure transborder exchange of information using international standards. The documentation and information specialists are also considering ways and means of translating at least the abstracts of research papers and monographs so that they could be fed into computers. Aside from national union catalogue and bibliographies, the computer can also use data bases for generating SDI (Selective Dissemination of Information) services, acquisitions and accessions lists for preparing inventories and directories.

5. NETWORK

Networking arrangements in the region are rather limited. Many countries are still in the planning or development stage of setting up national information networks in the social sciences.

At the national level, network arrangements have been identified in several countries in the forms of bibliographic data-base sharing, inter-library loan, and reference search. These arrangements are, however, only made amongst the general libraries or documentation centres, and not amongst the specialized libraries or documentation centres in the field of social sciences. Except a few countries which are now planning to set up a national social science information system, there is no attempt to co-ordinate social science documentation and information at the national level let alone networking. Co-operation, collaboration and some networking activities are not yet duly institutionalized.

At the regional level, there are a few general documentation and information networks. One is called the International Serials Data System -- Regional Centre for Southeast Asia. The Centre was established in 1976 with the purpose of creating and maintaining a regional data bank for information essential for the identification of serials published in the countries of the region.

ASTINFO is another example. Though it was originally designed for science and technology, the present programme of ASTINFO has a broader coverage.

While there are some networking efforts in general documentation and information area, there is no single network of documentation and information which covers social sciences per se, in the region. Certainly, there are some regional and international organizations which have developed some kind of networks or linkages, but they are all in specialized subject areas, such as population, communication, econometrics and so on. Below are summaries of such activities identified or presented at the meeting.

a) *Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre (AMIC):*

The Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre (AMIC) based in Singapore has sought to disseminate information pertaining to mass communication. It maintains a specialized library which serves as a documentation centre and clearing house of information and communication and brings out various publications. AMIC's Documentation Unit is a member of COMNET and maintains exchanges with member organizations of the network. The Country Representatives of AMIC also serve as a network in assisting the Centre in obtaining, compiling, and exchanging materials. There is a country representative each in ten countries in Asia.

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b) *Socio-Economic Data Banks Network for Asia and the Pacific (SEDNAP):*

SEDNAP was established in 1984, and its secretariat is based in New Zealand. The SEDNAP network activities have relied upon voluntary efforts. The purpose of this network is to encourage information flows between individual researchers on a range of topics relating to machine-readable socio-economic data.

c) *WHO:*

The World Health Organization has recently started the HELLIS (Health Literature and Library Information Service) network. It is a decentralized network with national focal points in the various countries of the region.

d) *ESCAP:*

Within the U.N.-wide system, ESCAP library is the focal point of ACCIS (Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Information Systems).

It has taken steps to create special networks in the area of agriculture, population, statistics, and human settlements. The ESCAP library serves as a key resource in the region for literature related to social and economic development.

From the above analysis it emerges that the levels of information facilities and resources vary from country to country. At one end of the spectrum are a few countries which have well-developed infra-structures and have institutionalized interactions with their counterparts abroad. On the other end, are those countries in which social scientists operate in a setting that lacks even adequate library facilities.

It is for this reason that the social scientists as well as government officials have evinced great interest in the establishment of a regional arrangement for sharing social science documentation and information. To prevent intellectual isolation, social science councils and academies are all eager to promote information exchange, and, what is more important, are ready to pool available resources once the opportunity of a regional framework is developed.

There is, of course, emphasis on the necessity to strengthen national infra-structures before taking steps towards participating effectively in a multi-lateral mechanism; however, most countries are aware that the participation in a regional network would make it possible to improve the national information system.

Each country seems to share the minimum requirements needed for building up a regional structure. These include:

- 1) Convergence of interest among the members involved in regard to the objectives and scope of the regional network;
- 2) Mutual appreciation of the advantages of creating a network;
- 3) Willingness to join the network and contribute to its programmes and activities; and
- 4) Desire to share the available technical and human resources to promote regional co-operation.

Taking note of the specific needs of the countries and the existing infra-structures, the elements for a regional co-operative programme in the area of social science documentation and information have been worked out and are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR APINESS

The support expressed in the country and agency statements provides a strong case for the view that the potential benefits flowing from a network will be substantial.

The participants were encouraged by the success of ASTINFO, which is now in its fourth year of operation. The development of a network for natural sciences and technology at the regional level before the development of a network for the social and human sciences reflects a similar chronology at the national level. Notwithstanding differing views about the relative emphasis the participants emphasized the point that a balanced approach to national and regional development demands a significant role for the social sciences.

Such a perspective reflects not only the current state of debate in the development literature but also the reality of many national experiences. Thus the need for a network in the area of social science documentation and information is clearly established.

If the benefits of the network are to be realised how should it be organized and operated? The feasibility study carried out for this purpose, and the contributions of participants sharpened the conceptual framework.

PRINCIPLES

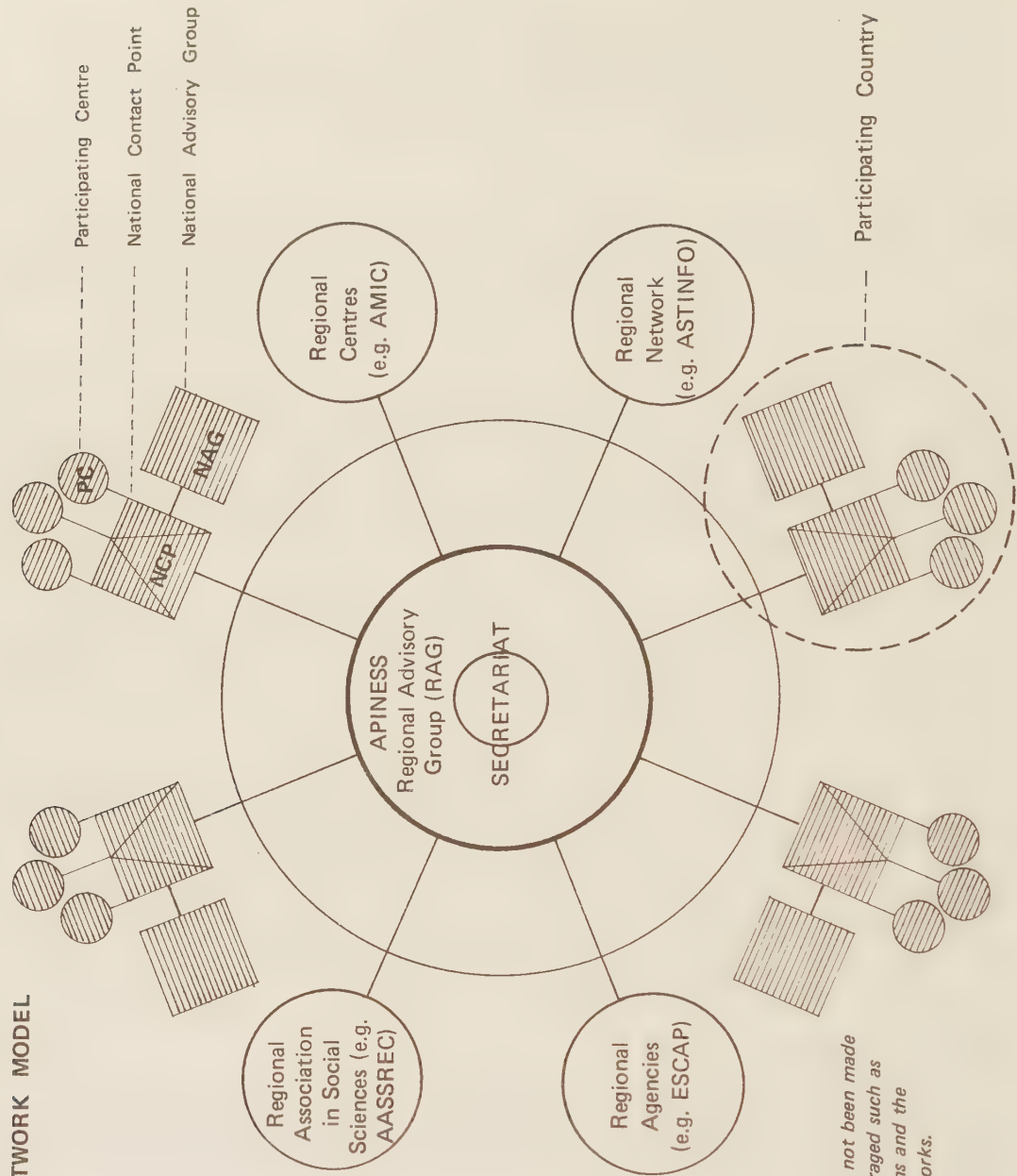
Following will be the guiding principles for the proposed Network.

- i) That the network should be a mechanism for breaking information-isolation and for helping develop adequate infra-structures at the national level;
- ii) That the concept of network, in this instance, should be defined as an *inter-institutional arrangement* and not as a synonym for a supra-national centre, which is not presently envisaged;
- iii) That the National Contact Point of each participating country be seen as a centre with its own circle of interactions guided by the commonality of interests and pattern of priorities;

- iv) That asymmetry in institutional frameworks at the national level implies that no single model can be prescribed but that each country should decide for itself its priorities for development of information infra-structures.
- v) That asymmetry in levels of development at the national level implies that some activity at the regional level may be required to co-ordinate initiatives by network participants to assist countries.
- vi) That the main guiding principle at this stage should be decentralization. The network should promote a system of linkages nationally, regionally and internationally and try to identify existing national centres that can add a regional dimension for certain specialized activities.
- vii) That the network programme should proceed step by step from the rudiments of cross-country co-operation that exist currently along the lines of TCDC and in those areas which do not require investment of huge sums of money.
- viii) That the raising of resources should be encouraged not only through co-operation among participants of the network by sharing for mutual benefit, but also by developing specific and general proposals for funding by agencies and associating with existing agencies which already have relevant infra-structures and which support the network objectives.

THE NETWORK MODEL

Flowing from the above principles is a network model which should form the organizational structure within which the activities of the network will be developed and operated. The following figure depicts the model graphically.



Note:

To simplify the figure provision has not been made for activities which would be encouraged such as bilateral, and multilateral transactions and the development of specialised sub-networks.

APINESS FRAMEWORK

A. ARRANGEMENTS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

I. NATIONAL CONTACT POINT (NCP)

With a view to facilitating co-ordination of programmes and of activities under APINESS, and to liaising with other agencies dealing with information systems, services, programmes and activities at the national, regional and international levels, it is desirable that each participating country establishes an APINESS National Contact Point (NCP). The NCP should be placed as high as possible in the national (government) structure.

The government designated National Contact Point shall be the key link with other NCPs, and will host the secretariat of the National Advisory Group (NAG).

II. NCP REPRESENTATIVE

It will be desirable for NCP to designate a senior officer to look after matters relating to APINESS.

III. NATIONAL ADVISORY GROUP OF NCP (NAG)

The NCP shall set up a National Advisory Group (NAG) responsible for advising and assisting it in the discharge of its duties.

The following categories of institutions and agencies, among others, may be represented on the NAG, the selection depending on the national context:

- (a) Government departments/bureaux responsible for APINESS affairs;
- (b) National social science and development sectors, information systems and services and national informatics, computer, telecommunications, and groups/agencies in the information industry;
- (c) Government departments/agencies responsible for receiving/providing financial aid in the information field;
- (d) National organizations responsible for Unesco affairs;

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- (e) National organizations responsible for other United Nations agencies such as FAO, UNEP, WIPO, etc. that have important information programmes/projects in the country;
- (f) National organizations responsible for activities with international non-governmental organizations, such as IFLA, FID, ICA, IDRC, ICSS, ICSSID, IFSO, AASSREC;
- (g) National organizations representing academic institutions or in charge of academic affairs in the country;
- (h) National professional societies concerned with library and information science and services;
- (i) National standardization organizations and other such bodies whose activities affect library and information handling and services.

The NAG shall meet at least once a year, preferably before September, to review activities undertaken and submit, through appropriate channels, proposals to UNESCO in October-November concerning activities for the following year; this would facilitate the consideration by UNESCO of these proposals in its annual programme and budget review. The NAG may also hold further meetings as often as necessary. The rules of procedure for the meetings shall be drawn up locally.

IV. FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF NCP

The main function of an NCP will be the promotion and monitoring of the Network's development in the country, and participation in the regional activities of APINESS. The more important functions and activities that an NCP may undertake are mentioned below. It is expected that NCPs will be innovative in developing policies, programmes, means and mechanisms designed to accelerate the process of establishing a co-operative information network in the region.

Each NCP shall:

- (i) Promote the concept of APINESS in the country and inform government bureaux and other agencies in the public and private sectors which are involved as users and/or as funding organizations of library, documentation, archival services and other information systems

and services at the national or regional level, of the APINESS programmes and activities, and elicit the former's co-operation in the activities of the network project;

- (ii) Liaise with appropriate national government bureaux and agencies, the National Commission for UNESCO, the Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific as well as other non-governmental agencies and organizations in order to facilitate the implementation of the APINESS project, assist in the development of the national network components of the regional network and ensure the support of national delegations for the project in the regional conferences of Ministers and appropriate regional meetings on information;
- (iii) Co-ordinate, stimulate and monitor the progress of the implementation of the national component of the regional network, monitor relevant national developments with a view to communicating them to UNESCO and the APINESS Regional Secretariat and collaborate with UNESCO in all matters relating to the APINESS project;
- (iv) Respond to requests from UNESCO concerning APINESS, such as: supplying information or conducting a survey; providing expert opinion; undertaking a specific activity or a sub-project; and taking national action on any APINESS related recommendation approved by the PGI Intergovernmental Council and/or APINESS Regional Advisory Group meetings;
- (v) Identify national/regional/international institutions, systems and services located in the country which could become Participating Centres of APINESS, prepare their profiles and submit them to UNESCO;
- (vi) Provide for the referral within the country of enquiries coming from other countries in the region and dealing with information sources, centres, systems, services, computer facilities, etc. which concern libraries and information processing;

- (vii) Help identify and mobilize financial resources for the network project, for example, by developing appropriate strategies for:
 - (a) including the APINESS national network in the country programming cycle of the UNDP, as also in projects financed by other agencies such as World Bank and the Asian Development Bank;
 - (b) bilateral and multilateral assistance;
 - (c) using UNESCO's Participation Programme as a source of small additional funds for the national component of the network.
- (viii) Whenever appropriate, prepare and publish in co-operation with the other NCPs in the region, newsletters and other information bulletins on APINESS related activities in the country or in the region;
- (ix) In due course, develop means and methods for the exchange of information between APINESS and information networks in other parts of the world on activities and experiences, for example, by exchanging materials such as calendars of activities, newsletters, etc., and arranging inter-network meetings and seminars, with international assistance.

V. PARTICIPATING CENTRE

A Participating Centre should be willing to, and capable of, mobilizing resources and taking action in order to:

- (a) host national/regional seminars/workshops/symposia/short training courses/demonstrations on topics in the information field;
- (b) accommodate and/or arrange for on-the-job training of information personnel and study visits sponsored by other institutions/agencies both within and outside the country;
- (c) undertake projects and studies in collaboration with UNESCO or other agencies in the information field;
- (d) on request, share experiences and expertise with other institutions in the country or abroad;

- (e) exchange information sources, data bases, software packages, etc. as appropriate and within the relevant regulations.

B. *ARRANGEMENTS AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL*

REGIONAL ADVISORY GROUP (RAG)

The representatives of the NCPs, of other regional organizations joining APINESS, and of AASSREC and ASTINFO will constitute the APINESS Regional Advisory Group (RAG).

RAG shall meet occasionally to review the operations of the network and confirm or amend network priorities and action programmes. The range of activities of RAG at the regional level could eventually be as broad as, and similar to, those of each NCP as listed earlier.

APINESS SECRETARIAT

The functions and activities of the APINESS secretariat will be:

- 1) To provide secretarial services to NCPs and other members of APINESS to facilitate co-ordination of Network activities at the regional level such as arranging meetings, receiving and distributing network information and producing reports.
- 2) To administer the affairs of the Network at the regional level such as maintaining records on the work of national APINESS networks, liaison with international agencies and with UNESCO National Commissions.
- 3) To develop information services for the Network.

Chapter Four

ACTION PROGRAMME FOR APINESS

Having established an institutional framework for the network, a programme of action is now described. The programme has evolved from a synthesis of reports from two working groups -- one on documentation and information services and the other on information analysis centres, data banks, and data archives.

In identifying the activities, the working groups were guided by the following considerations:

1. APINESS should not duplicate any activity already being implemented by existing networks; rather, it should identify work already being done in the social sciences, and attempt to link up with it in order to strengthen existing national resources.
2. There is an existing asymmetry in the resources and capabilities among the different members of APINESS: some are capable only of basic services, others of intermediate services, still others of advanced capabilities. There should be dialogue between advanced and less advanced centres for purposes of mutually developing and enriching resources and capabilities.
3. APINESS should tap and/or collaborate with existing national or regional networks like ASTINFO.
4. Recognizing that data banking in most countries in the region is in its infancy, APINESS should pay special attention to developing data banking facilities in relevant subject areas in the countries where they are non-existent or are poorly developed.

Following are the proposed activities in Data Banking, Documentation and Information Services:

1. *Development of Resources and Capabilities, 1986-1989*
 - a. Within the countries, efforts will be made to establish a core collection on social sciences, and to strengthen existing collections on social sciences. National Contact Points and participating centres will exert efforts to secure the necessary funding to finance these collections. Efforts will also

be made to equip the national centres with necessary software and hardware for the further strengthening of data banking projects with assistance of funding agencies (e.g. IDRC).

- b. Participants of APINESS will initiate active exchange of social science-related materials to help build each other's social science collection.
 - c. Participants of APINESS will conduct surveys and compile inventories of social science data banks, documentation and information centres and manpower in their respective countries.
 - d. Manpower development will be pursued in terms of training of specialists in data banking, documentation and information: (i) in transformation and repackaging of social science information; and (ii) on the use of new information technology.
2. *Adoption and Development of Norms and Standards of Information Handling, 1986-1988*
- a. UNESCO will make available to all APINESS participants existing UNESCO norms and standards on information handling.
 - b. NCPs will promote the development of local manuals on norms and standards which may be adopted at regional levels.
 - c. NCPs will promote the development of thesauri of terminologies in the various social sciences relevant to the Asia-Pacific region.
 - d. A regional seminar may be convened, in 1987 for the purpose of reviewing and refining the various thesauri.

[Note: In all these activities due attention will be paid to earlier efforts made within the United Nations System and elsewhere with regard to thesauri development.]

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3. *Development of Linkages and Co-operative Activities, 1986-1987*
 - a. NCPs will initiate the establishment of national APINESS networks, involving data banks, and documentation and information centres in the social sciences.
 - b. Participating members of the network will initiate a referral system to other potential sources of social science information.
4. *Training of Social Scientists/Users of Social Science Information, 1987-1989*
 - a. At all levels, meetings will be initiated for the purpose of promoting use of social science information among potential users.
 - b. Both at national and regional levels, interface between social scientists and documentation/information specialists will be encouraged by way of seminars, workshops, and other means of dialogue.
 - c. Activities designed for sensitising policy makers and users will be undertaken both at the national and the regional level.
 - d. National as well as regional training programmes on vocabulary control will be pursued.
5. *Publication of State-of-the-art Reports on Social Science Subjects, 1986-1989*
 - a. NCPs will encourage publication of surveys of current research in various social sciences.
 - b. NCPs will also publish registers of data banks and special bibliographies on specific social science topics.
 - c. Content analyses of existing social science bibliographies will be attempted to determine trends in social science research as well as research gaps. In this regard, AMIC may initiate a content analytical study on mass communication research in the region.

6. *Processing and Repackaging of Social Science Information/
Research Data for Policy Makers, 1987-1988*

- a. Special workshops on processing, repackaging, and translating of policy-oriented information will be conducted at various levels. UNESCO's support is expected in identifying and sponsoring resource persons to conduct these workshops.
- b. NCPs will take steps to promote translation of significant social science literature.

[Note: Manuals, guidelines, software packages, methodologies, etc. for this purpose are available with UNESCO.]

7. *Bilateral Agreements, 1986-1989*

National centres will attempt to influence inclusion of the following activities in social science related bilateral cultural agreements between various states in the region:

- a. Exchange of journals, bulletins, literature reviews, and information opportunities for training in data banking, documentation and information work.
- b. Exchange of documentation and information, and data banking staff for professional training on secondment basis.

8. *Development/Integration of Specialized Sub-networks into
APINESS, 1986-1989*

- a. The National Contact Points and Participating Centres will attempt to develop sub-networks dealing with specialized subjects. To begin with, such sub-networks be encouraged in the area of women's studies, and peace research and human rights.
- b. APINESS will co-operate with existing specialized information and documentation centres, e.g. ESCAP, SEDNAP, AMIC, and HELLIS.

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9. *Publication of APINESS Newsletter and Publicity of APINESS in Similar Bulletins to Keep Members informed of Developments and of On-going Projects/Activities in the Region, 1986*
 - a. The national social science documentation centre (NASSDOC) of the Indian Council of Social Science Research will initiate the publication of the *APINESS Newsletter*.
 - b. AMIC will include news and developments about APINESS in its *Asian Mass Communication Bulletin* and/or *Media Asia*. AMIC distribution of these publications will be expanded to include APINESS members.
 - c. ASTINFO will include news and developments about APINESS in its newsletter.

Chapter Five

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Highlighting the fact that social sciences in Asia-Pacific region have suffered from a relative neglect in the past, and that in the age of new and sophisticated technologies a significant contribution is expected from the social sciences -- both (i) in terms of recording the existing social and cultural structures which may drastically change or disappear as a consequence of "development", and (ii) in terms of documenting the very process of change and the resultant consequences with a view to helping the policy makers in their decision-making relative to development -- the participants of this meeting appreciate the initiative taken by UNESCO to promote social sciences in the Asia-Pacific region. The growing success of AASSREC, which was proposed at the first Asian Conference on teaching and research in social sciences organized by UNESCO in 1973, has paved the way for the establishment of a regional mechanism to link centres that are engaged in work related to social science documentation and information, and data banking. The formation of Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences, acronymed APINESS, is thus a timely initiative and is highly commended by the meeting.

2. The group proposes that the countries that expressed interest in joining APINESS at this meeting would take the necessary steps to implement the proposed activities. The first steps would be for the member-countries: (i) to formally indicate the National Contact Point (NCP), where it has not already been identified, and to set up an APINESS National Advisory Group (NAG) to give guidance to the National Contact Point (NCP); and (ii) to create an APINESS National Network of Participating Centres (PCs). It was suggested that NAG would consist of representatives of PCs, of the UNESCO National Commission, of Social Science Research Council/Academy (or its equivalent), and concerned ministries (such as planning, economic affairs, rural development, etc.). The exact composition of NAG is, however, to be decided by each country so as to suit its existing structural arrangements.

The three regional organizations, namely AMIC, ESCAP, and WHO would, furthermore, establish linkages with APINESS in accordance with their individual requirements.

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3. The representatives of the NCPs, of regional organizations joining APINESS, and the representatives of AASSREC and ASTINFO would constitute the APINESS Regional Advisory Group (RAG).
4. The present meeting shall be regarded as the first meeting of RAG and the programme of activities evolved by it are suggested for APINESS until the next RAG is convened, preferably within two years.
5. UNESCO's Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific (RUSHSAP) is invited to serve as the secretariat for APINESS, to begin with. For this purpose, it will be advisable if RUSHSAP could have an Associate Expert to look after APINESS, as is the case with ASTINFO.
6. The Group welcomes ASTINFO's approach to support and collaborate with APINESS in its activities of common interest, such as the project on Document Delivery, Sub-national Information System on Development Planning, Thesaurus building, and Training programmes. Such a close collaboration is necessary to avoid duplication and to ensure effective use of scarce resources.
7. In view of the importance assigned to Information in UNESCO's Medium-Term Plan for 1984-1989 -- which has one full Major Programme on Information, and the Division of PGI to implement it -- the Group strongly feels that in the forthcoming meeting of the Inter-governmental Council for PGI, the report on this meeting be placed on its agenda. The Group also wishes to urge the Council to recognize APINESS and support its activities under UNESCO's regular programme for the next biennium, i.e. 1988-89.
8. Similarly, the Group recommends to the UNESCO's Sector for Social and Human Sciences to make adequate provision in the next biennium for APINESS activities.
9. The Group notes with some concern the news that UNDP has dropped from its wardrobe of regional projects, the project on Regional Co-operation in Social Sciences for Development, which also had a cluster of activities on social science data banking, documentation and information. However, the Group expresses the hope that in view of strong support given by 16 countries of the region which sent their representatives to this meeting and to join APINESS, UNDP will reconsider its decision and will agree to provide support for that cluster of activities which relate to APINESS (as also others in view of their importance, if possible).

Conclusions and recommendations

10. The Group recommends that UNESCO's PGI Division may sponsor a Regional Seminar in 1987 on "Vocabulary Control with Special Reference to the Social Sciences" under the joint ASTINFO-APINESS auspices.
11. UNESCO, and PGI in particular, is requested to make available norms, standards, manuals, and software packages for information handling, developed by UNESCO, to all the APINESS participants.
12. The Group notes an urgent need for the provision of training in data banking, documentation and information-handling techniques with specific emphasis on information technology. Observing the constant and rapid changes in information technology, the group further recommends organization of refresher courses. Such training should be organized at the national level for those entering the field, and regionally for the trainers.
13. The Group also endorses the idea of convening sensitization seminars for the policy makers and other users of social science data.
14. All the NCPs of APINESS are invited to approach relevant authorities in their respective countries to suggest that bilateral cultural and similar agreements signed by the Governments should include provision for exchange of information in social sciences, study visits on exchange basis (for data banking, documentation and information), and exchange of software for computers.
15. In view of the interest of IDRC in the creation of a network among the national libraries of ASEAN countries (NLDC) and its interest in providing access to the indigenous literature on development (DEVSIIS), the meeting recommends that IDRC be approached for funds to support APINESS in order to:
 - (a) strengthen the National Contact Points and their ability to collect national materials;
 - (b) provide for, and promote, the use of computer and telecommunications technologies, to facilitate information exchange;
 - (c) provide short-term training (up to six months) for staff of the chosen institutions;

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- (d) provide funds for publication of joint bibliographies;
and
 - (e) provide some equipment to those institutions needing
it to enable them to participate in the network.
16. The meeting welcomes the offers made by the following to
initiate activities immediately under the APINESS framework;
- (a) *Indian Council of Social Science Research*
 - (i) to bring out APINESS Newsletter at its own cost;
 - (ii) to provide local host facilities for the inter-
national round-table organized by the Committee
on conceptual and Terminological Analysis (COCTA)
of the International Social Science Council to
discuss the preparation of a directory of
indigenous concepts (to be held in August 1986);
 - (iii) to include participating National Contact Points
in NASSDOC mailing list for Research Information
Series;
 - (iv) to extend training facilities in the area of
documentation to other countries of the region;
 - (v) to distribute literature received from abroad.
 - (b) *Socio-Economic Data Network for Asia and the Pacific
(SEDNAP)*

To add the names of APINESS participants to its mailing
list and to send them its publications regularly.
 - (c) *Asian Mass Communication and Information Centre (AMIC)*
 - (i) to include APINESS participants in its mailing
list;
 - (ii) to provide documentation facilities in the field
of Mass Communication by serving as the regional
focal point.
 - (d) *ESCAP*
 - (i) to serve as APINESS regional local point for the
exchange of information related to social and
economic development;

- (ii) to provide APINESS input in the newsletter of ACCIS (Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Information Systems).

17. The Meeting wishes to make the following recommendation to the Director-General of UNESCO:

Considering that

- ASTINFO and APINESS have identical objectives of facilitating and improving the exchange and sharing of information, data and experiences within and among countries of the Asia-Pacific region;
- both network projects have been initiated and supported by UNESCO in collaboration with Member States and organizations in the Asia-Pacific region.

Taking note of the fact that

The Division of the General Information Programme (PGI) has activities, programmes and projects especially within the ASTINFO framework to assist and develop social science information centres and libraries, for instance, assistance provided to national, University and academic resource centres and libraries, archives, and data for development services; the activities to improve document accessibility and availability under the Universal Availability of Publications (UAP) project for the region; the seminars, workshops and training courses for information handling in general, etc.

Also in view of the fact that some of the national co-ordinating agencies and associated/participating centres are common both to ASTINFO and APINESS.

Appreciating that

- (i) in project and mission oriented activities and research, users need information and data of an inter-disciplinary and inter-sectoral nature;
- (ii) available resources should be pooled, conserved and optimally used by avoiding unnecessary duplication of programmes, projects and activities at the international, regional, and national levels.

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Strongly urges UNESCO to

1. consider APINESS as a specialized network for the social sciences in the ASTINFO framework;
2. make available additional financial allocations to implement APINESS activities and programmes; and
3. establish, as soon as possible, appropriate mechanisms to co-ordinate programme activities of PGI, and SHS (RUSHSAP) to facilitate the rapid implementation of APINESS programmes and activities.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS

The meeting wishes to put on record its deep appreciation for the initiative, support, and co-operation of UNESCO regional office and of the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils in organizing the meeting and making it a success. The meeting takes this opportunity to thank Dr Makaminan Makagiansar, Assistant Director-General for Co-ordination of UNESCO Activities in Asia and the Pacific; Dr Yogesh Atal, Regional Adviser for Social and Human Sciences; and Professor Iqbal Narain for inspiring and guiding the meeting to its successful conclusion. The meeting is also appreciative of UNESCO's PGI Division and ROSTSEA for making available the services of Dr A. Neelmeghan and Mrs Susanne Ornager, and wishes to express its gratitude for their valuable contribution.

The meeting also expresses its appreciation for the warm hospitality accorded to the participants, and the quiet, efficient support services provided by the officials and staff of UNESCO throughout the meeting.

The meeting also acknowledges the contribution made by the resource person, Professor Ursula G. Picache of the Institute of Library Science, University of the Philippines. The feasibility study prepared by her provided good background material for developing the programme for APINESS. The meeting likes to thank AASSREC, AMIC, ESCAP, SEDNAP, and WHO for offering to publicise the newly created network and to co-operate with APINESS in various ways.

Conclusions and recommendations

The meeting also expresses its grateful thanks to the Thailand National Commission for UNESCO and the National Research Council of Thailand for their warm welcome. The meeting is indebted to the chairman (Malaysia), the two vice chairmen (India and Pakistan), rapporteur general (New Zealand), and the two rapporteurs of the sub-groups (AMIC representative and Sri Lanka) without whose guidance and efforts the present report would not have been brought out in a rather short time.

Finally, the meeting is thankful to the participants who are, in fact, both the creators of APINESS and custodian of its future.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

WELCOME SPEECH

Mrs Savitri Suwansathit

Deputy Secretary-General
Thailand National Commission for UNESCO

It is a great pleasure and honour to be here with you and to welcome you on behalf of the Thailand National Commission for UNESCO, particularly on behalf of our Secretary-General, Dr Saiyut Champathong, who is on mission abroad. He has asked me to convey to you his greetings and best wishes.

We, at the Thailand National Commission, are happy that this Regional Meeting of Experts is being convened by UNESCO in collaboration with AASSREC to discuss and develop programmes and activities for the proposed Asian and Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences.

Indeed, the idea of having some kind of regional organization for information and documentation in social sciences in our region was first proposed at the 6th Regional Conference of National Commissions for UNESCO in Asia and the Pacific, held in India, about 11 years ago. Since then, considerable preparatory work has been done and many countries, including Thailand, have shown interest in participating in this project, and have even expressed their support for UNDP funding for this activity.

The important tasks, therefore, remain in your hands to develop details of networking arrangements at the national and the regional level, and to propose priority activities and a workplan for the Network. I have every confidence that the experts nominated by the member countries will successfully accomplish the above tasks.

May I, once again, offer our warm welcome and our best wishes for the success of this regional meeting.

REMARKS

Dr Choompol Swasdiyakorn

Secretary-General
The National Research Council of Thailand

It is indeed my great pleasure and honour to have this opportunity to welcome all of you to the Regional Meeting of Experts to launch Asia Pacific Network of Social Science Information and Documentation Centres today, and to develop its programmes and activities.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere thanks to UNESCO and to the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils for collaborating in organizing this meeting which aims to prepare necessary details for launching the new network, tentatively named Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences (APINESS). This meeting is indeed timely marking a new milestone in the development of social sciences in the region. This will further enhance the possibilities of regional cooperation among information and documentation specialists working in the field of social sciences.

I personally support the establishment of this APINESS Network. Since UNESCO has already set up a regional network in the area of science and technology, called ASTINFO, of which my Council is the National focal point, it is most appropriate to have a parallel organization responsible for promoting the exchange of social science information, developing the required manpower, and strengthening the documentation and information centres in the region.

This, of course, can be done only on a cooperative basis. UNESCO and UNDP must play an important role in supporting this Network and its activities so essential for the development of social sciences, and for enhancing their contribution to national development. Needless to say, I am confident that your deliberations during the five days of this meeting will elaborate both the structure and the programmes and activities useful for the network.

In conclusion, I wish you all every success and a happy stay in Bangkok.

AASSREC STATEMENT

Professor Iqbal Narain

Secretary-General
AASSREC, New Delhi

It is a moment of great happiness for AASSREC that we have all assembled here today to launch *APINESS* (i.e., Asia Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences). For the past twelve years, AASSREC has, through its various activities like biennial conferences, collaborative research projects etc., attempted to bridge the *communication gap* among the Asian and Pacific social scientists. But a wide *information gap* still exists; social scientists of this region continue as yet to refer to Western social science concepts, theories, and researches; very rarely do they cite the works of social scientists of the region. It reminds me of an observation made by an eminent social scientist during a meeting of the founding conference of AASSREC. He said : "There is an urgent need for Asian scholars -- and even for scholars within each of the countries -- to take each other's work seriously and to develop a tradition of critical scholarship. I will probably not be mistaken if I state that our reference groups and the 'significant others' to whom we address our work are mostly located in Europe and the United States." These words still hold true. And we are here to get over this situation at long last. *APINESS* is, I hope, a significant beginning in this direction.

As you are all aware, one of the several objectives of AASSREC has been to encourage exchange of information among Asian and Pacific social scientists. However, it is a specialized task requiring a special set up managed by personnel trained in the art and science of documentation. It was for this reason that both UNESCO and AASSREC have been toying, for the past ten years, with the idea of developing a mechanism whereby the existing national social science documentation centres in the region could be knit together to provide information and documentation services to scholars in the Asian and Pacific region.

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In this endeavour, the contribution of UNESCO and its Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific (RUSHSAP) has been immense. It is common knowledge that RUSHSAP has, in the past one decade, provided yeoman's service to the cause of social sciences in the Asia-Pacific region by way of academic and financial inputs. As usual, RUSHSAP has always been receptive to new ideas. With financial assistance from UNESCO and through the cooperation of AASSREC member councils and others, a study on the feasibility of setting up a regional network of social science information and documentation centres was prepared by Professor Ursula Picache of the University of the Philippines. Her report was discussed at a special session of the Sixth General Conference of AASSREC held at Bali, Indonesia, in September 1985. Almost all the delegates who participated in the deliberations were of the unanimous view that the network must be immediately established. They were all aware of the fact that in most of the Asian countries social science research is done not in English but in the language of the respective countries, which makes its dissemination across the country difficult. They were, however, quite optimistic that once the network was established suitable solutions to this type of problems would be found.

Again, the need for establishing regional network of social science information and documentation was emphasized at the meeting of the Executive Council of AASSREC in which, in fact, the acronym -- *APINESS* -- emerged.

I am sure the establishment of network would help in bridging the *information gap* among the Asian and Pacific social scientists and open up new vistas of collaborative research and academic cooperation in the region. The proposed network will help disseminate information about accumulated contribution to study and research of the social science scholars in the region and would ultimately enrich the pool of universal knowledge where country barriers break and one finds oneself as a partner and a co-beneficiary in a kingdom of light which belongs to the world as a whole.

The efforts of UNESCO in general, and of the Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific in particular, have at last borne fruit. All of us owe an eternal debt of gratitude to UNESCO.

I know how Dr Yogesh Atal, Regional Adviser, and his team at the RUSHSAP, have worked hard for the establishment of this network. In fact, the launching of *APINESS* is a tribute to RUSHSAP and its staff. We may also recall here the dedicated work that the team had been doing for the promotion of social sciences in the region through its various activities like sponsoring of symposia, conferences,

training programmes and so on. My happiness, therefore, knows no bounds when I see that *APINESS* is being launched today.

In the end, I would like to welcome all the participants on behalf of AASSREC, in whose reflected glory we hope to shine and in whose wisdom *APINESS* would bask and lead a fruitful existence.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Dr Makaminan Makagiansar

Assistant Director-General for Co-ordination
of UNESCO Activities in Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO, Bangkok

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you, on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO -- Mr Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow -- to this meeting which marks the happy denouement of an effort initiated some three years ago, and adds yet another dimension to intellectual co-operation in the region in the field of Social and Human Sciences. I am overwhelmed by such an encouraging response from the Member States to the UNESCO initiative to launch a regional network of centres engaged in social science information and documentation.

I would like to express our grateful thanks to the various UNESCO National Commissions for supporting this initiative and kindly nominating participants for this meeting in consultation with their respective social science councils or academies. I would also like to welcome observers from the sister U.N. agencies and other regional organizations.

Asia-Pacific would be the first region to have such a network under UNESCO auspices; the lessons learnt here will hopefully guide similar efforts in other regions. Once such regional networks are established in different parts of the world, a way will be paved for meaningful inter-regional exchanges so vital for intellectual stimulation and advancement of knowledge. It is important that this network will operate in close collaboration with the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils (AASSREC) on the one hand, and the Asian Scientific and Technological Network (ASTINFO), on the other.

There could not have been a more appropriate time for launching of this Network. As you probably know, this year we celebrate the 40th anniversary of UNESCO. Last year was the completion of the first decade of UNESCO's Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific. The creation of the Regional Unit coincided with the formal inauguration of the Association of Asia-Pacific Social Science Research Councils (AASSREC). It is thus a happy coincidence that a Regional Network of Social Science Information and Documentation Centres is being launched in this year of celebration, when we do not only reflect on our past achievements but look forward

to promoting intellectual interaction and cooperation, in the coming years, among a growing international community of scholars. The proposed title for this new network gives us a good acronym, APINESS, which sounds like *happiness* -- a feeling that all of us assembled here share on this occasion.

Over the past two-three decades education has spread far and wide, registering growth in all fields of knowledge and building up cadres of specialists in a large number of developing countries. The indigenous scholarship has begun assuming responsibility of participating in the process of generation of new knowledge and assisting men and women of action in the utilization of available knowledge not only for economic, but also for social and cultural development. The concern for development, exhibited by all the countries of the Third World, has brought social sciences to the fore and opened up new avenues for its practitioners. This has necessitated the development and promotion of social sciences.

I will like to emphasise the point that in the entire United Nations System it is only UNESCO which has the special responsibility for the development of social sciences as academic specialties. UNESCO's Second Medium Term Plan (1984-1989) clearly states that : "Although the basic task of social sciences is to participate in solving practical problems facing society, their advancement depends on equal attention being paid to fundamental research and to applied action-oriented research". Without proper development of social sciences as scientific disciplines, no meaningful contribution can be expected from them in the resolution of problems -- be they relate to population, education, housing and health, labour and unemployment, or technological change. It is heartening that social science research is being undertaken in all these areas in different societies, and that the data base is gradually enlarging.

In such a climate of knowledge explosion, no individual scholar can afford to imbibe all that is available, for a human being has his own "limits to growth". In an article in the December 1982 issue of "The Futurist" Harlan Cleveland mentioned the availability of *time* for all of us within our 24 hours time budget and human longevity. But the *capacity* of the human species to reflect, analyze, and learn is, at present, unfathomable, thanks to the mystery of the potentialities of that beautiful portable computer which each one of us owns and carries -- namely, the human brain.

Let it also be emphasised that research is no longer the monopoly of a few metropolitan centres; nor is it carried out and reported in select international languages only. Moreover, with the increasing size of the producers of knowledge and of information, even the quantum of knowledge itself has grown to astounding proportions. To give you an idea of this magnitude, let me quote some statistics. Some 85 years ago, around 10,000 journals or periodicals were published every year; this number has grown 17 times by the year 1971. Similarly, between 1965 and 1974 the total number of books published has doubled -- from 269,000 to 571,800 titles. Today, 8 to 10 million scientific and technical documents are published every year which means around 27,000 documents a day. In the field of social sciences alone, from 1860 until the early 1970s social science literature has grown at an exponential rate, both in terms of size of literature and in terms of geographical distribution of the sources of information. It has been estimated that the annual output of social science literature in the world consists of a minimum of 5,000 primary journals and at least 100,000 monographs and reports. No doubt, none of us can even scan a fraction of this volume with a total 24 hour devoting to reading. But someone, somewhere, must be using one or the other of these printed communications in his or her work, and someone else may use somewhere in this vast world some set of this information at a future date. The fact that not everyone is using all that has been produced cannot be the argument to put a stop to knowledge production, or to consign all knowledge to the waste basket. We need to store and preserve the knowledge and utilize it to create more knowledge and to solve our practical problems. It must be said that not only the users are affected by these new developments. The traditional framework of libraries and information services can no longer adequately respond to these new demands. The techniques of storing, processing, and transmitting information are rapidly changing with unprecedented advances in technology. The new technology has made possible sharing of information globally and with remarkable speed. It has broken barriers to access and created possibilities for extension of horizontal ties to replace the continuing pattern of vertical relationships.

Information, understood as communicable form of knowledge, is a big ocean; we need proper navigating devices to wade through it, and to dip into it in search of needed pearls of wisdom.

The new technology has made it possible to tackle the problems of, what Toffler calls, INFO-SPHERE. With the help of computers, vast amounts of information can be stored on micro chips and retrieved with the press of a button. This technology is now available, and may become more sophisticated in years to come. It is necessary that we train cadres of people to handle this technology, and use it for purposes of information and documentation. Such computerized data bases have been set up in most industrialized countries. A UNESCO study found, however, "that out of the 900 bibliographical and numerical data bases now available on-line internationally, less than one per cent are produced in the developing countries." The same study also says that the "information produced by the developing countries as a result of practical activities and research in the socio-economic, scientific and technical fields is poorly organized and only partially covered by data bases of this kind".

We have thus to start from the scratch. And the task is enormous in view of the fact that information, particularly in the field of social sciences, is increasingly being generated in national languages that restricts its audience; moreover, it is vastly scattered and some of it may even have been harmed by poor preservation. Added to this is the problem of paucity of resources and absence of computerization of information systems in many countries.

I am sure through the regional network we should be in a position to identify the information needs of the varied clientele, the problems in acquisition and storage of information, the training needs of information specialists, and the modalities of regional cooperation.

I must say that there is a strong case for the creation of a mechanism to meet the information and documentation needs in social sciences in the Asia-Pacific region. This is a region which has some of the most advanced and highly industrialized countries on the one side, and the least developed, land-locked, and sea-locked small countries on the other. This is a region which is witnessing intense activity in the field of social and economic development. This is a region where most countries have switched over to their national languages both for purposes of imparting instruction in higher education and of conducting research. And, this is the region where with the availability of local expertise a new emphasis on endogenous development is guiding national policies and programmes. Such a scenario requires effective interchange of information. Politicians, administrators and policy makers must have or, at least, be exposed to, a social science orientation.

Similarly, the social scientists of these countries will be able to contribute to development only when they have access to research findings from other countries. Presently, the social scientists of the region know more about distant countries and regions, and there is virtual absence of information about their neighbours. This pattern has to change if social sciences were to make meaningful contribution to endogenous development and if the spirit of TCDC were to prevail.

The social scientists of the region realize this need. They have expressed it on several occasions and in different forums. Even at the recently concluded 42nd session of ESCAP, several countries stressed the need for regional mechanism to promote exchange of information. I firmly believe that for Human Resource Development -- which is the guiding theme of ESCAP deliberations, and a renewed emphasis in UNDP programming -- it is necessary to attend to information needs in social sciences. Developing cadres of social scientists in the developing countries is itself part of the process of Human Resource Development; similarly, social science contribution to Human Resource Development needs to be acknowledged.

UNESCO's programme for Social Sciences has developed as a response to this growing need. It is our hope that in this task UNESCO will succeed in raising extra-budgetary resources through UNDP funding and through voluntary contributions from Member States. In formulating a work plan for promoting these objectives, we seek your guidance; in the implementation of the work plan that you will develop here at this meeting, we look forward to your active collaboration and participation.

Standing on the threshold of the 21st century, we have already entered the era of information revolution. Today, the size of information-producers has become quite large and the areas of information have become varied. There is so much of knowledge generation that we need information about information, and we need information specialists to manage, store, and retrieve it. In future one would not be running places in search of information; information itself will be arriving at the doorstep of the user. Such a change in information production and dissemination is bound to affect our work-ways and thought-ways, our social and personal life, our cultural norms of secrecy and privacy, and our orientation towards the past and the future. The new information technology has made memorizing redundant and created opportunities for the utilization of energies, thus saved, in creative endeavours. Where would this machine culture lead us, humans? Will information society make us completely dependent and paralyse our thinking process? Will it debar us from the privilege of committing errors and learning from our failures? These, and similar other questions are not esoteric ones, and not mere rumblings of a philosopher. These are part of

the problematics of the future society where you as information specialists will be playing a key role, and therefore I will urge you to keep these questions in mind to ensure that machines do not completely dehumanize us.

It has been said that increasingly knowledge becomes the major resource in society: knowledge, the intangible, that replaces the tangible, material goods as the most important in economic growth; knowledge, the intangible, "as the primary source of wealth and power". To attain peace, knowledge must be made available to all. The spirit of your endeavours today is inscribed in the Constitution of UNESCO which functions to "maintain, increase, and diffuse knowledge". The Network you will be establishing will be a means "par excellence" to promote such a sharing of knowledge, and if I may add, the sharing of culture benefiting all countries of the region, without exception, and eventually the whole world, and thereby contributing towards mutual understanding and respect, universal solidarity, justice, and progress.

With these remarks I have great pleasure in declaring this meeting open, and in wishing you every success.

INITIATORY REMARKS

Dr Yogesh Atal

Regional Adviser for
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It is my pleasant duty to say a word of thanks and to orientate you to this meeting.

We are indeed happy to have with us Dr Choopol Swasdiyakorn, Secretary-General of the National Research Council of Thailand, and Khun Savitri of the Thailand National Commission for UNESCO. Their presence is a testimony to the importance Thailand attaches to this particular activity of UNESCO, and to the excellent co-operative relations that exist between us. Thailand is a founding member of the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils, and had hosted its 4th Conference in Bangkok when Dr Choopol Swasdiyakorn was its President. I am grateful to him for the honour he has done to us by his presence and by his kind words of welcome to the participants of this meeting. We are also thankful to Khun Savitri for speaking on behalf of the Thai National Commission. In her, we have always found a willing supporter of UNESCO, and a promoter of social sciences.

As you know this meeting has been organized in close collaboration with AASSREC -- an organization which was created with UNESCO's help and which has become an important forum for social sciences in the region. AASSREC at this meeting is represented by Professor Iqbal Narain who is its Secretary-General. He is Member-secretary of the Indian Council of Social Science Research which is perhaps the largest national organization, and has an impressive social science documentation centre.

On behalf of all of you I would like to express our grateful thanks to Dr Makaminan Makagiansar for kindly inaugurating the meeting and delivering an inspiring keynote speech which provides a good ground for take-off. Dr Makagiansar is a distinguished social scientist with years of international experience. I must inform you that Dr Makagiansar has recently assumed the charge of this office, and this is the very first UNESCO regional meeting to be addressed by him in the new capacity.

Present occasion is a matter of rejoice, as launching of a network of centres of social science documentation and information constitutes an important landmark in the history of regional cooperation in social sciences. Way back in May 1973, UNESCO organized the First Asian Conference on Teaching and Research in Social Sciences. That Conference mooted the idea of AASSREC and also recommended action for promotion of exchange of information between the countries. AASSREC now is a going concern with its membership extending to twelve countries, and hope of some others joining it by the time it convenes its 7th Conference in Seoul next year. AASSREC encouraged many countries to set up national level social science councils and academies so that social sciences receive the needed spurt and contribute to national development. Many of these councils have also taken steps to create, or to strengthen, infra-structures for social science documentation and information, so essential for both research and teaching.

There is a special role of infra-structures related to social science documentation and information in the context of this region. As you all know, social sciences are relatively recent in the countries of Asia and the Pacific. Much of the work in the earlier years was carried out by foreign scholars and was also published abroad and in alien languages. Many countries do not still have an access to this literature. They feel the need to acquire this material and lodge it at a national centre so that their students and scholars can make use of it. With the rise of indigenous scholarship, there is now the second set of publications which are mostly written in national languages; because of the language barrier, this remains out of reach to non-native scholars. The vast amount of survey data, and official statistics scattered in various research centres and government departments, also pose problems for those who wish to attempt secondary analyses. Creation of data banks and archival facilities is one possible answer to satiate the thirst for dependable information.

We are thus confronted with a peculiar situation. On the one hand, there is a growing recognition of the social sciences -- as is exhibited by the introduction of graduate and post-graduate courses in various social science disciplines, and by the demand for social science expertise in government bureaus and the private sector establishments. On the other, there is crisis of information -- not only that there are several virgin territories to be explored, but that even the results of previous explorations are not globally available. What I said some 12 years ago seems still to be largely valid : countries of the region are geographically proximate and culturally close, but they are academically remote. I wish to underline the point Dr Makagiansar made that we must have an easy access to information that already exists in order that we generate

new knowledge. Lack of access can only lead to the reinventing of the wheel, to the avoidable expenditure of our limited resources, to the discovery of trivia and the trite. Information is power; it is the strength of the intellect; it is the vitality of mind. Information provides contours to our cognitive map.

Recognizing the vital need of information UNESCO has assigned it an important place in its second Medium Term Plan. In 1979, UNESCO commissioned a review study on "Principal sources of social science information in Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia", which was subsequently published in the *International Social Science Journal*. In 1983, an Asian Regional Seminar on Information Sources, Systems and Services in the Social Sciences was organized by UNESCO in collaboration with the Institute of Library Science of the University of the Philippines. The participants of that seminar made a total of 19 recommendations among which one invited our Regional Unit to "extend its activities to include promotion of regional documentation and information services and assist national centres in strengthening and consolidating their activities". One outcome of the seminar was the publication in our Series of a monograph containing reports on the present status of social science documentation and information in 11 countries of the region. That publication is a part of your dossier. Guided by the Seminar recommendations, UNESCO commissioned a feasibility study for setting up the regional network. This study was carried out by the Director of the 1983 seminar, Dean Ursula Picache, who visited several countries of the region for holding discussions. Her study was sent to all the national commissions in the region and to the Member Councils of AASSREC for their comments and expression of interest in joining the network. The response has really been overwhelming. As many as 16 countries have offered to join the network.

We are glad that Dean Picache could come for this meeting. She will brief you in greater detail about her findings and assist you in developing the activities for this network. I am also pleased to report that the proposal for the network prompted the Philippine National Commission to convene a meeting of interested parties to discuss action at the national level. The report on that meeting has also been received. I am sure similar actions will be initiated in other countries following this meeting. I have just received a cable from the Australian government expressing strong support for this network, this augurs well.

This network is to be seen as a mechanism for breaking information-isolation, and for helping develop adequate infra-structures at the national level. The concept of network is proposed to be defined, in this context, as an *inter-institutional* arrangement, rather than creation of a supra-national centre. Each member of the network is to be conceived as a centre with its own circle of interaction guided by the commonality of interests and pattern of priorities. We do not envisage a centre-of-centres at the regional level. The guiding philosophy for this network would be *decentralization*. It will promote a system of linkages nationally, regionally, and even internationally. It will try to identify existing national centres that can add to them regional dimension for certain specialized activities, and also involve sub-regional and regional centres which may enlarge their clientele. The interactions in the framework of this mechanism will be mutually supportive.

We propose to build this programme step by step from the rudiments of cross-country cooperation that currently exists, and in those areas which do not require investment of huge sums of money. Cooperation implies sharing of resources for mutual benefit; this sharing may also result in raising of additional resources. We are sure that the countries that can afford to contribute their resources -- expertise, equipment, and even money -- to the network will do so in the interest of regional cooperation. We also hope that agencies such as UNDP will give recognition to this felt need and agree to support both the regional activities as well as national initiatives through regional and country programmes.

I may mention here, in the passing, that with the endorsement of eight Member Countries UNESCO has submitted to UNDP a project proposal for inclusion in the Fourth Programming Cycle which relates to Regional Co-operation in Social Sciences for Development, focussing specially on training, research, and documentation. The idea for such a programme was floated by the National Commissions of this region as early as 1975 when they met in New Delhi. Following their recommendation, a series of consultations were organized both with the Member States and with the social science community, which formed the basis for the UNDP proposal. This proposal includes a cluster of activities in the area of social science documentation and information. Pending its approval, which we hope will be forthcoming, UNESCO has already decided to establish co-operative links in the area of documentation and information. This meeting is a consequence of that decision. Your recommendations here will further strengthen the case for UNDP support.

There are many fronts on which action seems to be indicated. For example, there is an uneven development of information infrastructures in the countries of the region. Even the bibliographic control is not properly developed in some countries. Only first steps, and that too in few countries, have been taken in regard to data banking. Computerization of information is a far cry. Survey data are still processed, in many countries, through primitive techniques which are both time-consuming and inefficient for multi-variate analyses. Preservation of quantitative data, creation of Machine readable Catalogues (MARC), linkage with on-line information systems such as DIALOG, development of ISIS (Integrated set of Information Systems), and compilation of indexes and abstracts are the tasks that need to be attended.

Some countries have succeeded in creating national grids of libraries and documentation centres, and evolved mechanisms for inter-library exchanges, and for data banking; these need to be strengthened and similar linkages created in those countries where they do not exist. Through this network, participating countries can also hope to get associated with similar networks in the field of information such as ASTINFO -- about which you will hear more from my colleague Dr Neelmeghan who has come all the way from Paris for this meeting, and Ms Susan Ornager who looks after ASTINFO secretariat in Jakarta.

I realize that there are many pressing needs in the field of information and documentation. I acknowledge that there are country variations in regard to organization of Social Science Information. I am aware of some regional efforts and initiatives to relate the centres of documentation and information and to promote communication amongst documentalists and information specialists. But there is no common platform to consider all these and develop a systematic and workable programme. This proposed regional network would provide such a platform. Its success or failure will depend on what the participating members of the Network will do, or will not do. UNESCO's role in this regard is that of a catalytic. It has articulated your concern. It would assist you in mobilizing resources. And it will be associating with you in the implementation of activities that you will plan.

We have one full week for this exercise. But the agenda is indeed heavy, and will demand all your attention and time. Since you have come prepared to accomplish this challenging task I have every hope of a successful outcome. I can assure you of our fullest co-operation and assistance.

May I close with my very best wishes for a pleasant stay in Bangkok and a productive discussion at this meeting.

Appendix II

AGENDA

- Item 1. Opening of the Meeting
- Item 2. Election of Office Bearers and Adoption of Agenda
- Item 3. Briefing on the proposed network and presentation of background documents
- Item 4. Country situation on social science documentation and information centres
- Item 5. Institutional framework and governing structure of APINESS
- Item 6. Programme activities and proposals for 1986-1989
 - (a) Data Bank and Archives
 - (b) Documentation and Information
- Item 7. Conclusions and Recommendations
- Item 8. Adoption of the Report
- Item 9. Closing of the Meeting

Appendix III

PROGRAMME OF THE MEETING

Monday, 12 May 1986

08:30 - 09:00	Registration
09:00 - 10:00	Agenda Item 1 : Opening Session - Welcome Remarks by UNESCO and AASSREC representatives
10:00 - 10:30	Tea/Coffee Break
10:30 - 11:00	Agenda Item 2 : Election of Chairman, Vice-chairman and Rapporteurs and adoption of agenda
11:00 - 12:00	Agenda Item 3 : - Resource Person briefing on feasibility study - Secretariat presentation of APINESS project proposal and existing similar regional networks
12:00 - 13:30	Lunch Break
13:30 - 16:30	Agenda Item 4 : Brief presentation of country situation/activities by participants and observers

Tuesday, 13 May 1986

- 08:30 - 12:00 Agenda Item 5 : Institutional framework,
governing structure and
organization of APINESS
- implementation strategy
 - regional co-ordination
mechanism
 - national co-ordination
mechanism, and
 - country contribution
- 12:00 - 13:30 Lunch Break
- 13:30 - 16:30 Agenda Item 5 (contd.)
- Agenda Item 6 : Consideration of activities and
proposals for 1986-1989
- General Discussion

Wednesday, 14 May 1986

- 08:30 - 12:00 Agenda Item 6 (contd.) through organization of
- *Working Group I : Documentation
and Information Services:*
 - conservation and provision
of primary documents
 - contents description and
dissemination
 - *Working Group II : Information
analysis centres, data banks
and data archives:*
 - supply of information
based on available data
- 12:00 - 13:30 Lunch Break
- 13:30 - 16:30 Agenda Item 6 (contd.)
- Working Groups' reports writing

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Thursday, 15 May 1986

08:30 - 12:00	Agenda Item 7 : Plenary Session to (i) discuss working groups' reports, (ii) conclusions and recommendations
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12:00 - 13:30	Lunch Break
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13:30 - 16:30	Free
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Friday, 16 May 1986

09:00 - 12:00	Agenda Item 8 : Adoption of the Report
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	Agenda Item 9 : Closing of the Meeting
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Appendix IV

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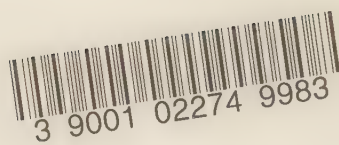
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